

REMARKS

Examiner Interview

Applicants hereby acknowledge the Examiner Interview between the Examiner, Lourdes C. Cruz, and Attorney for Applicants, Serge J. Hodgson, on February 13, 2004. Co-filed herewith is a completed Applicant Initiated Interview Request Form PTOL-413A, which was faxed to the Examiner on February 11, 2004, prior to the Examiner interview, and completed by the Attorney for Applicants following the Examiner Interview.

During the interview, the Examiner agreed that Claims 1, 3-14, and 22 as amended herein are allowable. Further, the Examiner agreed that the objection to the drawings had been overcome by the Amendment filed on December 2, 2003 as indicated by the Examiner in box 8 of the Advisory Action dated January 23, 2004. The Examiner indicated that upon receipt of this Supplemental Amendment, the Examiner would enter this Supplemental Amendment and the Amendment filed on December 2, 2003 and timely issue a notice of allowance.

As to this Supplemental Amendment

In the Advisory Action dated January 23, 2004, the Examiner indicated that the Amendment filed December 2, 2003 has not been entered. Accordingly, the listing of Claims herein is relative to the Claims as set forth in the Amendment filed on January 13, 2003. Please disregard the listing of Claims in the Amendment filed on December 2, 2003.

In this Amendment, Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 2. Accordingly, Claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice. Claims 21 and 23-26 have also been canceled without prejudice. Claims 3-4, 14 and 22 have been amended to depend from Claim 1. Further, Claims 14 and 22 have been amended for consistency with Claim 1. All Claim amendments herein are related to matters of form and thus are unrelated to patentability.

Drawings.

Applicants note that in the Advisory Action dated January 23, 2004, the Examiner indicates that the drawing correction filed on December 2, 2003 is approved. Accordingly, no further action with respect to the drawings is necessary as agreed to by the Examiner and if this is incorrect please contact the undersigned Attorney for Applicants.

Claims 1, 5, 7-14, 22 are novel over Hughes.

Claims 21 and 24-26 have been canceled without prejudice thus obviating the rejection of these claims.

The allowable subject matter of Claim 2 has been incorporated into amended Claim 1. Accordingly, amended Claim 1 is allowable. Claims 5, 7-14, 22, which depend from Claim 1, are allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1.

For the above reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claim 6 is patentable over Hughes in view of Bauer et al..

Claim 23 has been canceled without prejudice thus obviating the rejection of this claim.

As set forth above, amended Claim 1 is allowable. Claim 6, which depends from Claim 1, is allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1.

For the above reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Allowable Subject Matter.

Claim 2 has been canceled thus obviating the objection to this claim. As set forth above, amended Claim 1 is allowable.

Claims 3-4, which depend from Claim 1, are allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1.

For the above reasons, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to Claims 3-4.

As to 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

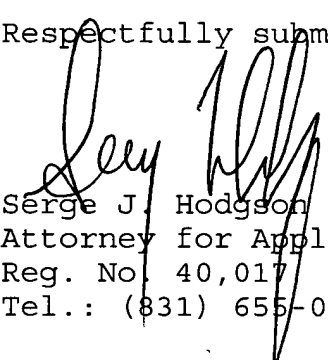
All claim amendments herein are directed to matters of form and place the application in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, this Amendment is entitled to entry pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.116.

Conclusion

Claims 1, 3-14, and 22 are pending in the application and the Examiner has agreed that these claims are allowable. For the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims and issuance of a notice of allowance. If the Examiner has any questions relating to the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned Attorney for Applicant(s).

Respectfully submitted,

Via Hand Delivery

  
Serge J. Hodgson  
Attorney for Applicant(s)  
Reg. No. 40,017  
Tel.: (831) 655-0880